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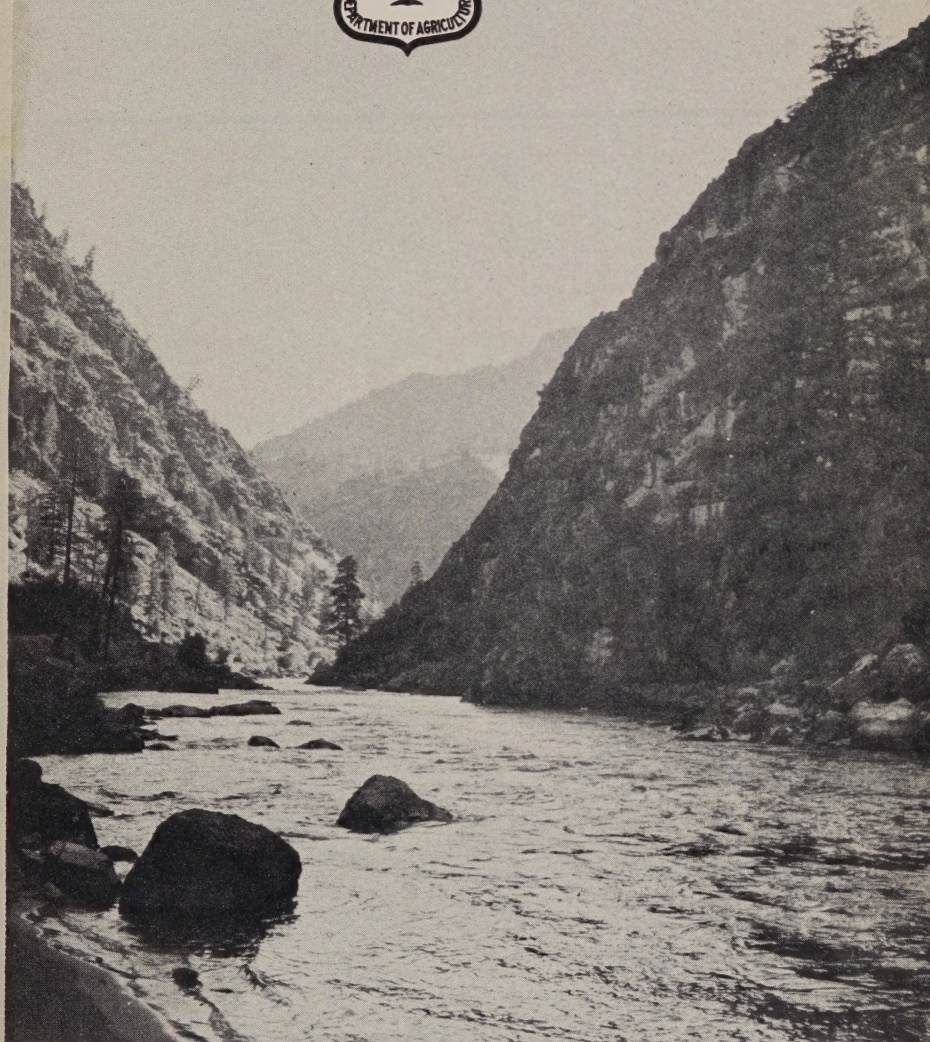
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Reserve

SALMON NATIONAL FOREST

IDAHO

1950



The Salmon, "River of No Return."

F-398446

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE

• Intermountain Region

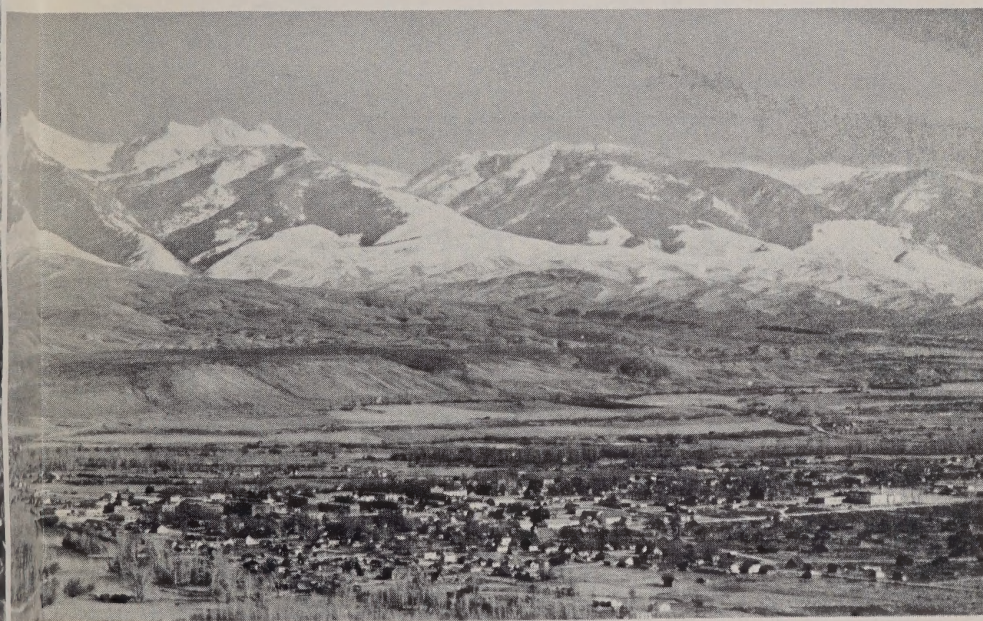


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Ponderosa pine, lodgepole pine, and Douglas-fir, are the principal timber species on the Salmon National Forest. This timber is harvested under sustained-yield management to insure a perpetual supply for the local lumber industry. Only mature trees are logged; young trees are left to grow.



Fire—In a matter of minutes the growth of a century may be destroyed.



Idaho, with the Continental Divide in background. Downstream communities like this are wholly dependent on ample water from well-covered watersheds.

SALMON NATIONAL FOREST, in central Idaho, lies on the western slopes of the Continental Divide in one of the most picturesque and primitive areas of the United States. The sharp-toothed Bitterroot Range on the Idaho-Montana State line forms the north boundary of this forest, and 90 miles to the south it joins the Challis and Payette National Forests. It extends 135 miles from Birch Creek Summit in the east to a few miles below the mouth of the Middlefork of the Salmon River on the west. Elevations vary from 2,840 feet at the mouth of Horse Creek on the Salmon River to 11,324 feet at the top of lofty Gunsight Peak in the vicinity of Leadore. The watersheds of the Salmon River and its main tributaries, such as the Lemhi River, Northfork and Middlefork of the Salmon River, Panther Creek, and Horse Creek, are included in the forest. The Salmon is one of the largest national forests. It has an area of 1,792,351 acres.

Created as a national forest July 1, 1908, by Executive Order of President Theodore Roosevelt, the Salmon is composed of parts of the former Salmon River and Bitterroot forests. It was named for the river that divides the forest into nearly equal parts. Salmon National Forest affords many thousands of people a livelihood and offers a wide variety of interesting places to see and things to do—for the hunter with a camera or gun; for the angler along its rivers, mountain streams, and lakes; for the historian in its legends; and for those who seek recreation and rest in its wilderness settings. This mountain wilderness, with its scores of beautiful lakes and clear, fast-running streams, is for your use and enjoyment.

During the summer months temperatures seldom exceed 90° F. except in the valleys. The annual mean temperature at lower elevations ranges from 40° to 45°. In the summer, warm days and cool nights are ideal for outdoor activities. Winter temperatures as low as 37° below zero have been recorded in Salmon.

Rainfall over the Salmon forest is almost lacking from July 1 to the middle of September. The earliest snow usually occurs at the higher elevations the latter part of September. Winter snow depths vary from an inch or so in the valleys to 84 inches on Lost Trail Pass.

Rich in History

Nearly 150 years ago modern history for the Northwest began one August afternoon in 1805 when Captain Clark of the Lewis and Clark expedition, after months of arduous travel toward the headwaters of the Missouri River, arrived at the Agency Creek summit and looked down into the Lemhi Valley. The members of his party were the first white men to view the Pacific slope from this point, and the first to attain the summit of the Continental Divide. They had been guided to this point by the Shoshone Indian girl, Sacajawea.

Some time was spent by Lewis and Clark in the Lemhi River Valley to procure horses from Sacajawea's people and to pack supplies from the headwaters of the Missouri, where the canoes were abandoned, over the Continental Divide to the Lemhi Valley. An advance exploration trip was



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Thrilling boat trips can be made down the turbulent Salmon River in scows piloted by veteran rivermen.

made down the Salmon River as far as what is now Spring Creek in an attempt to find a route through the Salmon River Canyon. Because of the many rapids in the river and the precipitous nature of the country, the party abandoned the proposed route and reentered Montana via the Bitterroot Valley.

Today Lewis and Clark's trail and camp sites have been marked in many places through the Salmon forest. The completeness of their journal and the accuracy of their maps made the correct retracing of their route of travel possible, even though more than one hundred years had elapsed since their history-making expedition. (See map for route of travel.)

On September 19, 1832, Captain Bonneville entered Lemhi Valley via Birch Creek, coming from the Snake River Valley, and followed down Lemhi and Salmon Rivers to Carmen Creek, where he built a temporary fortification, horse corrals, and log cabins, the remains of which are still to be seen. Captain Bonneville camped here for 2 months and then retraced his trail up the Salmon and Lemhi Rivers.

The next historical event of importance in this area was the immigration of the Mormons into the Lemhi Valley in June 1855 for the purpose of establishing a colony. They built Fort Lemhi, constructed the first irrigation works in what is now Idaho, and tilled the fields. Because they were sorely troubled by Bannock Indians, they abandoned the settlement and returned to Utah in March 1858. Remnants of the old fort are still to be seen, and one of their irrigation ditches, following the east side of the highway near the old fort, is still in use.

There was no permanent white settlement prior to July 1866 in what is now the Salmon forest or Lemhi County. At that time, a party of five prospectors from Elk Creek, Mont., led by F. B. Sharkey, discovered placer gold on Napias Creek. Immediately there was a great stampede, composed largely of recently discharged Civil War veterans, and the town or camp of Leesburg was established. It flourished for a few years, producing much gold. Freight was supplied first via Fort Benton, Mont., and later, with the Union Pacific completed, from Corinne, Utah. Leesburg is said to have had a population of 7,000 in 1867, and in 1869 Lemhi County was created by act of the territorial legislature.

Geologically, the valleys of the Salmon and Lemhi Rivers are extremely interesting. Aeons ago a very deep lake occupied the low altitudes of



F-453512

Gold dredge on Hughes Creek near Northfork, Idaho. Lead, silver, copper, zinc, tungsten, fluor spar, and cobalt are also found on Salmon National Forest. Minerals are one of the greatest undeveloped resources of this forest.

Lemhi Valley, and vast beds of lignite formed along its shores. Fossil remains of fish are frequently found in the residual lake bed deposits. According to one geologist "Salmon Lake was a geological fresh water lake of the Miocene Age, resulting from the upheaval of the mother lode. It occupied the Salmon River Valley from Northfork southward; the Pahsimeroi and Lemhi Valleys, with its outlet over the Lemhi-Birch Creek divide, whence it drained down Birch Creek. It was about 5,000 feet deep at its deepest place. About 5 million years ago, the water of this lake began carving its way through the upheaved mass, creating the canyon and rapids of the Salmon River, one of the most wonderful and magnificent gorges that

nature ever produced. Ever since that day the drainage of these valleys has been to the northwest, toward the Columbia River." Today, Salmon River Canyon is second deepest in the United States.

Recreational Opportunities

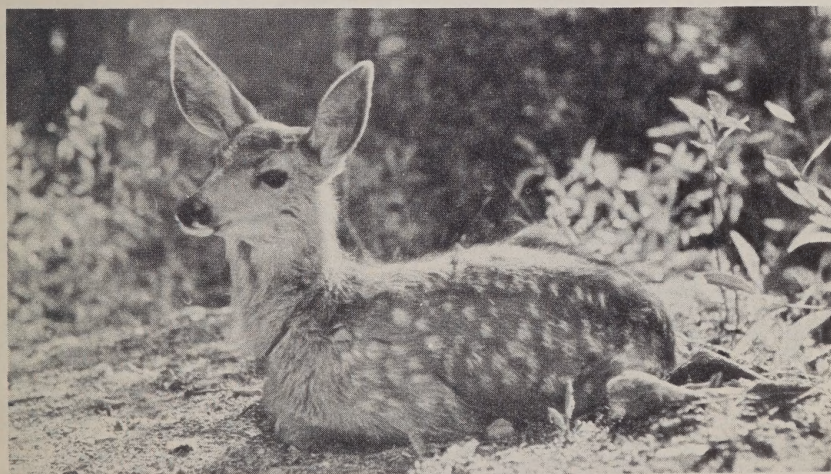
Bountifully endowed with the beauties of nature, the Salmon National Forest offers many opportunities for recreation. One may relax along cool, quiet streams and placid lakes, and nature lovers seeking solitude will find it in back-country settings seldom visited by man. The 460 miles of road and 2,400 miles of horse and foot trails of the Salmon lead to many places of irresistible appeal. Except in periods of extreme fire danger forest visitors may move about freely, and there is no restriction against camping anywhere on the forest. However, all visitors are requested to be careful with fire and to leave a clean camp.

Forest Service camp grounds are constructed to harmonize with natural surroundings. Following is a list of improved camp grounds on the Salmon forest:

Cougar.—On Williams Creek Road, 17 miles southwest of Salmon. Piped water supply; sanitation facilities; picnic tables and camp shelter. Season: June to September.

Deep Creek.—On Panther Creek Road, 32 miles southwest of Salmon. Piped water supply; sanitation facilities; camping, picnicking, fishing and hunting. Season: May to October.

Long Tom.—On Salmon River Road, 65 miles west of Salmon, 1 mile from mouth of Middlefork. Piped water supply; sanitation facilities; picnicking, fishing and hunting. Season: April to November.



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A mule deer fawn. Mule deer are found on all parts of the forest and are the most numerous of Salmon forest game animals. Their number is controlled not so much by hunting as by the amount of winter range available.



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The abandoned mining town of Leesburg, Idaho, first permanent white settlement in Lemhi County.



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Green forests and grass-covered slopes mean ample springs and living streams yearlong—that is why forest watersheds are of such vital importance. Protection of watersheds is a primary objective in the management of national forests.

Twin Creek.—On U S 93, 4 miles north of Gibbonsville. Piped water supply; sanitation facilities; camping, picnicking, fishing and hunting. Season: June to October.

Yellowjacket Lake.—On Hoodoo Road, 65 miles southwest of Salmon. Within 100 yards of Yellowjacket Lake. Sanitation facilities; camping, picnicking, fishing and hunting. Water is obtained from the lake.

Interesting Trips by Road and Trail

Idaho Wilderness Area.—Encompassing over 1 million acres of the Salmon, Boise, Challis, and Payette National Forests, the Idaho Wilderness Area was established in 1931 to preserve primitive conditions. Much of this area remains today as it was before the arrival of the white man—a wilderness where deer, elk, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, bear, and cougar are found. Unexcelled hunting and fishing exist throughout the entire area.

The area is roadless, and it can be reached only by pack trails from end of roads at Meyers Cove, Hoodoo Meadows, and below Shoup. Arrangements should be made in advance for saddle and pack horses, and an experienced guide should be employed. An emergency airplane landing strip is located at Bernard Creek.

Picturesque spots within the Idaho Wilderness Area include the Bighorn Crag, an area dotted with lakes and towering granite peaks. The impassable canyon of the lower Middlefork forms an impressive scene. This section of the river is passable only by boat or in the winter on the ice. Indian paintings are found throughout the entire length of the canyon.

Salmon River Canyon.—A popular automobile trip can be taken down the Salmon River Road from Northfork to a short distance below the mouth of the Middlefork. The canyon in places is over a mile in depth and presents an insurmountable barrier when the end of the road is reached. Beauties of the Salmon River are well presented by the Pine Creek and other white-water rapids. Ancient Indian paintings appear on cliffs along the river.

An interesting side trip from the main Salmon River Road can be made up Spring Creek and on the ridge road to Long Tom Lookout. From this point one can view the awe-inspiring depth of the canyon from an elevation exceeding 8,000 feet.

Salmon River—Panther Creek Loop.—Another favorite drive for many visitors is a loop trip that starts at Salmon and goes down the Salmon River to the mouth of Panther Creek, up Panther Creek to the mouth of Napias Creek, and thence over the divide to Salmon via the Williams Creek Road. This trip is particularly pleasing in the spring when the Idaho State flower, the *Syringa*, blooms in profusion along Panther Creek.

Gibbonsville—Lost Trail Pass.—An attractive drive can be taken by following U S 93 from Salmon to Lost Trail Pass on the summit of the Continental Divide. In the vicinity of Gibbonsville, many abandoned mines can be seen. A short distance from the main road up Hughes Creek a large gold dredge has been operating for many years. During July and August many people pick huckleberries in this area.

Adventurous Boat Trips

The Salmon River presents a challenge to the adventurous who desire a scenic trip through an area entirely uninhabited by man. This river flows for 150 miles through a canyon passable only by boat. It is called "The River of No Return" because its many rapid falls make upstream navigation impossible. However, trips are made down this turbulent stream in safety in large, flat-bottom scows whose huge sweeps are handled by veteran rivermen. These trips start at Salmon and end either at Riggins or Lewiston, Idaho.

Another fascinating boat trip can be made through the canyon of the Middlefork, which, like the Salmon River Canyon, is passable only by boat. This stream is shallower than the main Salmon, and large rubber boats are generally used for the trips.

Winter Sports

Lost Trail Pass Ski Course, a hundred feet off U S 93 and on the summit of the Continental Divide on the Idaho-Montana State line, is enjoyed 5 months a year by many winter sports enthusiasts. Three adjoining runs, served by a ski tow, are suited to the skill of the individual skier. This winter playground has snow depths to 7 feet.

Fire

The greatest hazard to forests is fire. In a matter of minutes the growth of generations can be destroyed. Fire is not a temporary disaster. In addition to burning the forests and plant cover, the ability of the land to produce may be destroyed for many years. Watershed and forage values are gone; game has fled; streams in summer are dry; and a desolate scene indeed is presented to the sightseer.

Lightning and man are responsible for about 80 fires a year on the Salmon forest. The man-caused fires usually start at lower elevations and are the most dangerous. Before the column of smoke has risen to where it can be seen by lookouts, the fire has spread over a large area, making suppression a difficult task.

To aid in combating fires, the Salmon has constructed lookouts, roads, trails, landing fields, and telephone lines. These improvements provide facilities for a fire-fighting force of about 50 lookouts and smokechasers employed during the hazardous part of the year from June to September. In addition, at key points throughout the State, the Forest Service employs groups of smoke jumpers. Through the use of these groups quicker action is obtained on back-country fires far from the nearest road.

During the hazardous fire season all visitors are urged to carry a shovel, ax, and water bag, and to follow these simple rules in protecting the forest from fire:

1. Do not flip burning cigarettes from your car. Use the ash tray.
2. Be sure your match is out—break it in two before it is thrown away.
3. Do not smoke while traveling through the forest by foot or horseback. Stop in cleared areas to smoke and then bury the stubs in mineral earth.
4. When camping build only small fires in areas clear of flammable material. Never leave a fire until the last spark is out.
5. Put out unattended fires. If help is needed, call the nearest forest officer.

Supervisor headquarters is at Salmon. Ranger headquarters are at Northfork, Leadore, Lemhi, Salmon, and Forney.

EVERYBODY LOSES WHEN TIMBER BURNS BE SURE YOUR FIRE IS OUT—DEAD OUT



F-453518

Indian paintings.





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Alpine meadows and grassy slopes of the Salmon forest furnish spring and summer pasture for many thousand sheep and cattle. Stock raising is the principal industry of Lemhi County.

SALMON NATIONAL FOREST— A PUBLIC HERITAGE

WATERSHEDS: The headwaters of the Lemhi River, Northfork and Middlefork of the Salmon River, Panther Creek, and the main Salmon River.

TIMBER: Four billion board feet.

WILDLIFE: Big game, fish, birds, and many fur-bearing species.

MINERALS: Gold, silver, cobalt, copper, lead, tungsten, and zinc.

RECREATION: Mountain scenery of unsurpassed beauty, outstanding opportunities for camping, pack trips into remote country, mountain climbing, and nature study.